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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

35TH YEAR

JUNE 12, 1978

IN RESEARCH -- On Metabolism

Americans consume about six billion pounds of hydrogenated, or solidified, vegetable oils each year. Nearly 90 percent of this is soybean oil that has been hydrogenated into margarine, salad oil or shortening.

The question among food scientists is what nutritional value we get from these oils and what effect this consumption level has on the body. Some studies have indicated only small or no increases in cholesterol and fat levels due to hydrogenated fats, others have indicated significant increases. There also has been some research to show an increase in energy levels, while other studies indicated these fats contributed to high blood pressure, more fragile cell membranes and altered metabolism.

Until now, scientists could only trace the oils through the body by "labeling" the oil components with radioactive elements. This limited the use of this method to animals or terminally ill human volunteers.

Now, however, U.S. Department of Agriculture research chemists have developed a safe method of identifying these compounds in the oils that makes it possible to feed them to healthy persons. For breakfast, volunteers can drink a "deuterated milk shake" with labeled fatty acids mixed with milk protein, sugars, water and even flavoring of each volunteers' choice. It is consumed after 12 hours of fasting with only water, fruit juice or black coffee taken during the next four hours.

Blood samples are taken at frequent intervals after breakfast, according to Dr. Edward A. Emken, research leader in the Department's Northern Regional Research Center at Peoria, Ill.

From this new testing method, scientists hope to find how the body uses these fats. They have already learned that the way the fats are metabolized by the body varies more than expected among individuals.

ICE CREAM PROPOSAL DROPPED

The USDA is dropping its plans to grade ice cream. While most of the 464 people responding to the Department's invitation to comment on ice cream grade standards were in favor of them, many thought the quality grades would tell them what ingredients were used in the ice cream. But the proposed quality grades did not include that type of information.

The proposed grading system would have been based only on the flavor, body, texture and color of ice cream to help consumers identify the various quality levels of ice cream found in retail stores.

So, consumers will continue to judge quality for themselves, and the Food and Drug Administration will see that producers provide ingredient information on ice cream labels, starting July 1, 1979.

FOOD CLIPS

Boned and rolled roasts require more cooking time per pound than roasts with bone in. Aged meat cooks slightly faster than unaged meat.

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Do not completely thaw meat combination dishes at room temperature. That may permit growth of dangerous bacteria, according to USDA home economists.

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Veal should always be cooked well done for full flavor. Long, slow cooking is best; broiling is recommended only for veal patties.

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Why put a rack underneath a roast of beef? It keeps the meat out of the drippings and increases circulation of heat. With a rib roast, however, the rib bones can serve as the rack.

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Put butter on the bread first if you are making a sandwich. The butter keeps the filling from soaking into the bread and also adds moisture and flavor.

FREE PUBLICATIONS

While supply lasts, free, single copies of the following booklets are available from the Publications Office, GPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

"Apples in Appealing Ways," Home and Garden Bulletin #161

"Baking for People with Food Allergies," Home and Garden Bulletin #147

"Making Cottage Cheese at Home," Home and Garden Bulletin #129

JUNE FOOD SUPPLIES

Agricultural Marketing specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture list the following food supplies for June according to mid-May figures.

* **Plentiful:** Beef (but supplies declining); Broiler-fryers; Eggs, milk and dairy products; canned and frozen concentrated grapefruit juice.

* **Adequate:** Pork (with seasonal decline); Turkey; Fresh apricots, nectarines, and peaches, lemons, limes, grapefruit, and oranges; processed fruits, canned cling peaches and fruit cocktail; dried prunes and raisins, canned and frozen vegetable supplies and fresh potatoes, rice and dry beans.

* **Light:** Plums; canned and frozen concentrated orange juice; dry split peas.

Key:

Plentiful--more than enough for requirements.

Adequate--enough to meet needs.

Light--less than adequate; not enough for normal needs.

ABOUT YOU 'N' ME

Women moving up: Mary V. Plumer, now city editor of the Kennebec (Augusta, Maine) Journal, reported to be the first woman to hold that position in her state. Susan Lapinski, formerly associate editor of Lady's Circle magazine in New York City, has now moved into the editor's slot. Fran Carpentier-Covello is now the managing editor.....Carol Kramer has moved into the assistant features editor position at the New York News...Liz Rittersporn is now editor of the Daily Family Living section at the News.

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